

September 16, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: CAL-LEARN CONTRACTS

This is in response to your Board Motion of August 12, 2003, regarding the renewal of the Cal-Learn contracts with the following Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) agencies: AltaMed Health Services Corporation, El Nido Family Centers, Foothill Family Service, Southern California Youth and Family Center, and Childrens Hospital Los Angeles. Specifically, your Board instructed me to report back with a statistical report of the Cal-Learn program broken down by provider, the number of people utilizing the program Countywide, and the number of people who are eligible to use the program because they are children of CalWORKs recipients.

You also expressed concerns relative to the performance of the AFLP agencies in providing services to Cal-Learn teens that ultimately help them graduate. On this point, we know from recent research that case management has made a difference in the lives of Cal-Learn teens. In June 2000, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) contracted with the University of California at Berkeley for a statewide demonstration project. The findings determined that there was a significant increase in the number of teens graduating when they participated in this program. In 1999, a study by the California Department of Health Services found that pregnant teens who were provided case management services experienced more successful outcomes than did pregnant teens in the general population. The specific details of both studies are detailed further in this memo.

While we know in general terms that AFLP intervention has a positive impact on Cal-Learn teens, DPSS has done a poor job of monitoring these specific contracts for performance. We initiated these contracts in 1995, and subsequently renewed them without outcome measures or performance-based pay standards. Moreover, a review of contracts within my Department indicates that the vast majority lack adequate performance standards. Clearly, we have to do better, and we will be incorporating measurable standards in future contract renewals.

Background on Cal-Learn

Cal-Learn is a mandatory participation program for CalWORKs participants who are under 19 years old (there is no minimum age limit), are pregnant or parenting, receive CalWORKs cash assistance and have not yet completed their high school education. The Cal-Learn Program is designed to reduce long-term welfare dependency by encouraging and assisting teen parents to complete their high school education.

The program uses a case management approach as well as financial incentives and penalties to encourage teens to use existing education services. State law requires that counties contract with AFLP agencies to provide intensive Cal-Learn case management services.

Statistical Report on the Cal-Learn Program

CDSS mandates that each County collect information on the Cal-Learn program as part of its regular reporting on welfare programs. The data my Department has collected on this population has followed the State requirements. Over the 12-month period, from July 2002 to June 2003, an average of **3,437** teens a month participated in the Cal-Learn Program. Different periods will result in different average numbers participating. The 3,600 teens reported in our Board Letter of August 5, 2003, are based on caseload projections for the next three years.

In July 2003, 44,880 teen girls and 40,410 teen boys between the ages of 13 and 19 were children of CalWORKs recipients. Of these teens, a total of 3,128 were utilizing the program Countywide, **3,015** (6.7%) were teen girls and **113** (0.3%) were teen boys. These 3,128 Cal-Learn teens were provided services by the five AFLP agencies, as shown on the attached Table 1. It is important to note, that one of our largest AFLP agencies estimates that the potential pool of program participants is 7% of our total CalWORKs teen population. Our comparable 6.7% rate is a strong indicator that we are identifying our eligible Cal-Learn teens.

As mentioned earlier, CDSS contracted out a statewide, control/treatment random assignment demonstration project on Cal-Learn. The Final Report of the Demonstration was issued in June 2000 (*Impact of California's Cal-Learn Demonstration Project: Final Report*. UC DATA University of California, Berkeley). There were several findings from that demonstration that are important to our understanding of the successes and challenges of the Cal-Learn program.

- ❑ Among those 1,007 students who received the Cal-Learn "treatment," which is equivalent to the current Cal-Learn case management approach, **17.5%** graduated with a HS diploma or GED. This is compared to only **4.7%** graduation rate for the control group that did not receive Cal-Learn services. (The current graduation rate performance of our Cal-Learn teens is **11.8%**, and we hope to increase this percentage with higher standards of performance.)
- ❑ Graduations are incomplete and inconsistently recorded in the data used to track teens, so it is difficult to calculate an accurate graduation rate. But, among those who graduate, more graduate with the GED than with the HS diploma.
- ❑ Attendance rates decline the older the teen in Cal-Learn. This also complicates the calculation of graduation rate.

A 1999 study of the AFLP by the California Department of Health Services (Raymen, David. *The Adolescent Family Life Program: Reporting of Selected Outcomes*, DHS) found that pregnant teens who were provided case management services by AFLP agencies experienced fewer premature births (10.5% for the AFLP teens vs. 13.7% for the general population), fewer subsequent pregnancies, and increased percentages of youth who "reenrolled" in school after dropping out.

Plans for Developing Performance Measures

In addition to the information requested above, the Board Motion instructed us to include appropriate performance measures and outcomes for the Cal-Learn program in the contracts to be executed via delegated authority by November 30, 2003. Here are some of the measures that are being negotiated to assess the performance of the Cal-Learn contractors.

- ☐ A true recording of High School attendance and completion, and a calculation of an appropriate graduation rate.
- ☐ Indications of the teen's return to school, if they are dropouts, and a calculation of an appropriate school return rate.
- ☐ Rates of performing satisfactorily with overall grade point average of 2.0, or better.
- ☐ School enrollment rate.
- ☐ Orientation attendance rate.

I want to assure your Board that we will be incorporating into the Cal-Learn contracts performance measures that truly reflect the successes of the program. I have signed and executed the Cal-Learn Agreements on a month-to-month basis, not to exceed three months, effective September 1 and ending November 30, 2003. Finally, I will be coming back to your Board within 60 days with performance measures that are negotiated with the AFLPs for the next year of the contract.

I will continue to report to your Board on a regular basis on the status of this program.

BY:mh

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

Table 1
Pregnant / Parenting Teens in Cal-Learn
by Gender, Age, and Adolescent Family Life Provider (AFLP)

July 2003

Sex	Age	El Nido Family Centers	Foothill Family Service	Childrens Hospital Los Angeles	Youth & Family Services	AltaMed Health Services	Total
Female							
	13	2	0	1	0	1	4
	14	17	5	5	5	6	38
	15	46	18	10	20	25	119
	16	158	31	29	51	73	342
	17	261	92	62	94	137	646
	18	531	176	107	172	253	1,239
	19	250	73	61	70	132	586
	20	17	6	4	8	6	41
	Total	1,282	401	279	420	633	3,015
Male							
	14	1	0	0	0	0	1
	15	2	0	0	0	0	2
	16	1	0	0	3	0	4
	17	6	4	2	1	3	16
	18	37	8	1	9	13	68
	19	9	1	0	2	9	21
	20	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Total	56	13	3	15	26	113
Grand Total		1,338	414	282	435	659	3,128